

What we're looking for:

- Hollow body
- Straight Arms
- Extended shoulders (reach for the sky as high as you can)
- Strong core
- point toes
- Head in

Common mistakes in first handstand attempt:

- Arched back: the kid hunches over
- Bent arms: they fall over
- Not kicking high enough.

Cognitive Stage:

In order to ensure the athlete does their handstand properly and safely they must understand the proper posture of the handstand and have the strength to do so.

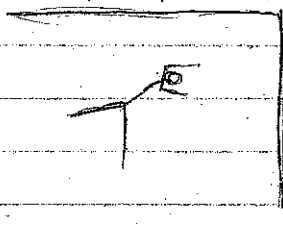
- 1) Athlete needs to have a strong core / hollow body posture.  
∴ we have the athletes hold a hollow body position.
  - This strengthens the athletes core and teaches them to use the hollow body position.
  - The athlete should also have their arms straight above their heads and their shoulders extended as far above their heads as possible.

2) Lunge, lever, kick

To teach the athlete to kick high enough and how to generate the power to kick up.

First, the athlete stands in a lunge position with their arms straight over their heads with extended shoulders like they're learning from the hollow body.

Next, the athlete will move to the lever position. In the lever position



the athlete will learn to have one leg up before kicking up into the handstand.

Finally, the kick the motion. The kicking motion gives the athlete the opportunity to feel out the balance between kicking too far and not kicking high enough. This should be done while maintaining the hollow body position and straight arms.

Through these drills the athletes should be able to demonstrate an understanding of why the hollow body position is useful and why straight arms to extended shoulders. Then they should show some progress on doing the skill with some more grace than before. The athlete will be able to refine and practise the use of these skills in the associative stage.

#### Associative stage:

To help refine the skills learnt in the first stage the next drills provide the athlete an opportunity focus on some of the smaller details of the handstand while practising and improving the skills learnt in the first stage.

- 1) Have the athlete get into a plank position with extended arms and put a knee high block under their feet.
  - If the athlete's hollow rock is strong enough the coach should be able to lift the athlete's feet up and push the athlete into handstand position.
  - If the coach lifts the feet and the legs split or the body turns then the athlete needs to squeeze their legs and core tight. This drill can be used as a check point to see if the athlete has progressed enough to move on. If they haven't then they should continue practising the hollow body position until they can pass the checkpoint drill.
- 2) Handstand against the wall is an opportunity for the athlete to independently practise the skill. This drill will:
  - Show athlete how hard to kick to reach a straight and full handstand.

- Let athlete solidify skills without fear of falling over.

When doing a handstand on the wall the athlete can focus on smaller details like keeping the head between the arms rather than looking at the floor, pointing the toes, straight legs. The coach supervising should be aware and looking for athletes who are leaning their feet against the wall for support while their backs aren't touching the wall. This would cause the athletes back to arch.

3) Next, the athlete can try freestanding handstands. If the athlete uses all the skills he or she has acquired, the handstand should come easily. The athlete will have to work on balance but perfect practice makes perfect and by being disciplined and using the skills the handstand will come easily.

#### Autonomous Stage:

In this stage the athlete will have progressed enough that their handstand will be nearly second nature. This allows the athlete to work on the handstand by learning to hold it for longer, walk on the hands, and use their handstand on different apparatuses in the gym.